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MULETEER OF TOLEDO

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OR,

KING, QUEEN, AND KNAVE.

A Comic Drama,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY

JOHN MADDISON MORTON,

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ACT I.

EXTERIOR OF A POSADA,

With distant Mountainous Country (W. GORDON).

ACT II.

THRONE ROOM IN THE PALACE OF ZAMORA,

(F. LLOYDS).

Dance by the Ladies of the *Corps de Ballet*, arranged by
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ANTE-ROOM IN THE PALACE.

 For COSTUMES—See last page.



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SCENE I.—*Exterior of a Posada, R. Vines laden with grapes, forming a sort of arbour across the stage; the scene open at back shewing distant mountainous country.*

PEASANTS, male and female, discovered singing and dancing in various parts of the stage, smoking and playing their mandolins and guitars; PABLO hurrying about serving them with wine.

Chorus during the dance.

To merry castanet,
And sound of tamborine,
We sing our canzonet
In this gay festive scene.
Long may our joyous revel,
Where our hearts lightly beat,
Send dull care to the devil,
To the measure of our feet.

Solo.

We Spaniards may not be renowned
For labour, work, or industry;
But where's the nation to be found
Will dance as long and merrily as we.

(at the end of the dance and chorus, PABLO looks down the valley at back)

PABLO. Heyday, who have we here? A young peasant girl: she should be a Castilian by her dress. She's a stranger to me, and so is the young lad with her. *(the PEASANTS signify to one another that they wonder who it can be)* Never mind, we'll give them a hearty welcome whoever they are.

OMNES. Aye! aye!

Music. Enter ELVIRA, in the costume of a peasant girl, and DONNA CARMEN as a peasant boy, up the valley at back; they descend the path at back, and come forward, looking about timidly.

ELVIRA. Your pardon, senors, and yours too, senoras, but my brother Perez and I have travelled far to-day—

THE MULETEER OF TOLEDO.

*First Performed at the Royal Princess's Theatre,
on Monday, April 9th, 1855.*

Characters.

DON PEDRO.....	MR. JAMES VINING.
DON SCIPIO.....	MR. G. EVERETT.
COUNT TORRIBIO DE POMPOLO.....	MR. HARLEY.
MANUEL (<i>a Muleteer</i>).....	MR. WALTER LACY.
PABLO (<i>Keeper of a Posada</i>).....	MR. F. COOKE.
JOSE (<i>a Peasant</i>).....	MR. RAYMOND.
LORD IN WAITING.....	MR. STOAKES.
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DONNA CARMEN (<i>her Confidante</i>).....	MISS MURRAY.
COUNTESS DE POMPOLO (<i>Principal Lady of the Bedchamber</i>).....	MRS. WINSTANLEY.

Courtiers, Ladies, Maids of Honour, Officers, Peasantry, &c.

Scenery. &c.

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ELVIRA. Your pardon, senors, and yours too, senoras, but my brother Perez and I have travelled far to-day—

PABLO. (R.) Whence come you, my pretty one?

—ELVIRA. From Castille; our waggon broke down, and—and—
(*aside to CARMEN*) Why don't you say something?

CARMEN. (L.) And—and—we lost our way, and—and—here we are.

—ELVIRA. And here we are! (*bobbing a curtsey—hastily to CARMEN*)
Don't eurtsey—you forget you're a man. (*CARMEN makes an awkward bow*)

PABLO. The long and the short of it is, you'd like to rest a little, eh?

—ELVIRA. Yes, senor; and eat a little, and drink a little.

CARMEN. I should like to eat and drink a good deal! (*PEASANTS laugh*)

PABLO. Well said, my lad. Well, there stands my inn, and though I say it, under that hospitable roof—no man, woman, or child ever asked for anything that they didn't get it—when they'd got the money to pay for it.

—ELVIRA. Oh, then I'm afraid we can't patronize your establishment, worthy man. (*retires up*)

CARMEN. No; unless you'll let us have whatever we ask for without paying for it. The fact is, we've only one purse between us, and that's empty. (*OMNES laugh*)

PABLO. You've got no money? Then how dare you—
(*crossing to C. and threatening CARMEN*)

JOSE. (*coming between PABLO and CARMEN*) Come, Master Pablo, let the young folks have some refreshment—I'll pay for them. After all a flask of your wine wouldn't hurt you much.

—ELVIRA. (*aside*) It would be much more likely to hurt us. (*to JOSE*) Thanks for your kindness, senor.

JOSE. Now, honest Pablo, for a few flasks of your best wine.

Exeunt PABLO into posada, R.

You'll drink with us, eh youngster? (*slapping CARMEN on the shoulder*)

CARMEN. Yes, of course I will. (*aside*) He's dislocated my shoulder! (*JOSE goes up towards posada*)

—ELVIRA. (*crossing to C.*) We will follow you directly; the fact is, we must wait here, as we expect to meet a—— (*aside to CARMEN*)
Why don't you say something?

CARMEN. Because we—we're informed——

—ELVIRA. That an uncle of ours lately deceased——

CARMEN. Would meet us here. (*PEASANTS laugh*)

—ELVIRA. (*aside to her*) No, no, no.

CARMEN. No, no, no; but as this is a family matter, you'll excuse my entering into further particulars.

JOSE. Well, you'll follow then. Now then, my lads, let's have a glass.

Music, and the first four lines of Opening Chorus sung. JOSE and some of the PEASANTS enter the posada, the rest exeunt at various entrances.

—ELVIRA. Ha, ha, ha!—is this not a delicious adventure?

CARMEN. I confess, madam, I don't see anything particularly delicious in being spoken to in such a familiar free and easy style, by a set of low creatures! Oh, your Majesty, be prudent—should any one suspect—

ELVIRA. Don't be alarmed, good Carmen, I'll play the peasant girl to perfection, depend on't. Oh, Carmen, how beautiful the country is—how pure the sky—how sweet the flowers.

CARMEN. Flowers! I see nothing but poppies and dandelions—I'm sure the flowers in the Palace are much more beautiful.

ELVIRA. Not they! the poor things always seem to pine for fresh air, like their mistress. Oh, that I could end my days in this peaceful, happy spot, and never see that odious throne of mine again. Ah! if you had only seen me in my convent six short months ago!—I was the merriest of the merry, and the most mischievous into the bargain.

CARMEN. But one fatal day, your uncle, the King of Murcia, took it into his head to die.

ELVIRA. Yes, and as he was stupid enough not to leave any direct heir to the crown, I was summoned from my convent, my playmates, and playthings, to fill the vacant throne. (*crosses, L.*)

CARMEN. But why did we secretly leave the Palace, at daybreak this morning, in these disguises?

ELVIRA. That's a state secret! which, if you'll promise not to divulge—

CARMEN. Never!

ELVIRA. Then listen.—We have come here to meet our royal husband.

CARMEN. Husband?

ELVIRA. I should say our intended husband! Don Sancho de Cordova, only brother to the king of Castille, and heir presumptive to his crown.

CARMEN. And is he young and handsome?

ELVIRA. I have never seen him.

CARMEN. And yet you are going to marry him? Blindfold? but after all, Don Sancho may be a very charming, handsome, amiable person.

ELVIRA. Handsome or not, amiable or not, I must marry him.

CARMEN. Not if he squints? I wouldn't marry a man who squinted—no! not for all the subjects in the world!

ELVIRA. What! offend a powerful sovereign like Sebastian of Castille, by refusing an alliance with his brother, Don Sancho? No, no, besides I confess my curiosity is excited. (*with mystery*) For I have been secretly informed that this mysterious lover of mine, in order to ascertain if the flaming accounts he had received of our royal charms are correct, has determined to judge for himself, under an assumed name and character.

CARMEN. A prince in disguise! Oh, how romantic! And you—

ELVIRA. At once determined upon the same plan—hence my presence here in the disguise of an humble peasant girl—for I have ascertained that this very day, this very hour, he will pass this very spot.

CARMEN. But, madam, you cannot go up to every man you see and say "Please sir, are you my intended, Don Sancho, heir presumptive to the crown of Castille?"

ELVIRA. Ha, ha! No, the same information tells me, he has assumed the name and occupation of one Manuel, a Muleteer of Toledo. (*laugh heard within the posada*) Hush! silence!

Enter JOSE, PABLO, and PEASANTS, from the inn—others enter at various entrances during the dialogue.

JOSE. Ah, pretty one! I have paid Pablo for a good dinner for you, so don't let him cheat you!

ELVIRA. Oh, sir, how can we repay you?

JOSE. Why by ^{exercising} putting your pretty ^{voice} feet in motion, give us a ^{song} dance.

ELVIRA. Oh indeed no, sir, I never dance. ^{sing}

JOSE. Well then a kiss my pretty one.

ELVIRA. Oh I could not think of such a thing, sir.

JOSE. Well, a kiss or a ^{song} dance I mean to have—so make your choice.

PABLO. Yes, yes, a ^{song} dance or a kiss all round.

OMNES. Yes, yes, a ^{song} dance or a kiss all round. (*PABLO and JOSE endeavour to catch ELVIRA, she eludes them, the PEASANTRY laugh*)

ELVIRA. Well, well, pray don't touch me, and I'll ^{sing} dance.

Music—CARMEN crosses from L. to R., and asks one of the MALE PEASANTS to lend his guitar, and ~~CARMEN plays while~~ ELVIRA. ^{gives it to} dances.

Long Dance.

JOSE. (*who has become rather tipsy*) Bravo, bravo! egad, you ^{sing} dance so well I must have the kiss now!

OMNES. Aye, aye, a kiss!

ELVIRA. Oh, no, no pray don't.

*ELVIRA escapes—CARMEN fussing about, dreadfully frightened—
at the moment that PABLO seizes ELVIRA, MANUEL appears at
back, from R.*

MANUEL. Hey-day! what's the matter here?—a petticoat in distress?

ELVIRA. Oh, sir, protect me from these rude men.

MANUEL. Aye, that will I. (*throwing his arm round ELVIRA, and shaking his long whip at PABLO, &c.*) Baek! baek I say! or I'll use this whip of mine in a style you'll not easily forget. (*to CARMEN*) As for you, young man, I suppose you can fight your own battles?

PABLO. (L.) And who the devil are you?

MANUEL. Well, as a civil question deserves a civil answer—what the devil's that to you? however, if you particularly wish to know, I'm a Muleteer, on my road from Castille to Murcia.

ELVIRA. (R. C., *to CARMEN*, L.) 'Tis he! 'tis Don Sancho!

PABLO. Well, Master Muleteer, if you take up the cudgels for every girl who screams because she's asked for a kiss, it must rather interfere with your business.

MANUEL. (L. C.) My business is no business of yours.

PABLO. Well, we needn't quarrel about a trifle; if I've offended the young woman, I beg her pardon.

PEASANTS. Yes, we beg her pardon.

Music—PABLO and the PEASANTS again go into the inn, the rest at various entrances.

—ELVIRA. (*aside to CARMEN*) Leave us alone.

CARMEN. Alone!

—ELVIRA. Pshaw! surely you may trust me for a few minutes alone with my intended husband!

CARMEN. But—but suppose—only suppose after all, that he shouldn't be he?

—ELVIRA. You shall be satisfied. (*to MANUEL*) You have rendered me an important service, senor—whom have I to thank!

MANUEL. My name is——

ELVIRA. Manuel!

—MANUEL. Yes; my occupation——

ELVIRA. A muleteer!

—MANUEL. Yes; my birthplace——

ELVIRA. Toledo!

—MANUEL. Yes; I say, young woman, you seem to know all about me!

—ELVIRA. From report, that's all! (*MANUEL goes up, L.*—ELVIRA *to CARMEN*) Now, are you convinced?—not a word—leave me.

CARMEN. Pray be prudent; and recollect, if you should want assistance, you've only got to scream, and I'll instantly rush and—alarm the neighbourhood.

Music—*Exit* CARMEN, R. U. E., looking suspiciously two or three times at MANUEL.

MANUEL. What the deuce is the young jaeknapes staring at me for?

—ELVIRA. (*aside*) He's decidedly good looking! that's one very great point—I wonder what he thinks of me?

MANUEL. (*aside*) She's uncommonly pretty! (*aloud*) Young woman, who's that long boy who has just left us?

—ELVIRA. My brother.

MANUEL. You're sure of that? He's not your sweetheart—lucky for him; if he had been, I should have felt very much inclined to wring his neck.

—ELVIRA. (*aside*) I'm afraid he's a very violent young man. (*aloud*) He's merely gone to order my carriage—I mean my waggon!

MANUEL. Oh, then you don't belong to this village?

—ELVIRA. No; I live in the neighbourhood of Mureia.

MANUEL. Mureia! I'm going to Mureia—I'll give you a lift if you like. You needn't toss your head up in that sort of way, you wouldn't be the first young woman that had ridden along with me—no, not by hundreds.

—ELVIRA. Hundreds! (*aside*) I'm afraid he's very inconstant. (*aloud*) Thanks, Senor Muleteer, but I am your debtor for one important service already.

MANUEL. Nonsense! I'd have done as much for any woman.

—ELVIRA. You would? (*annoyed*)

MANUEL. Of course; I have done so once this morning already—about an hour before I saw you.

—ELVIRA. (*still more annoyed*) Indeed; and pray who was the lady?

MANUEL. The queen.

—ELVIRA. The queen! You took her part?

MANUEL. Of course; it wasn't likely I should stand quietly by and hear the poor little woman abused.

—ELVIRA. (*aside*) Poor little woman! Rather familiar. (*aloud*) And so you heard the "poor little woman" abused?

MANUEL. Yes; by a parcel of lazy, grumbling rascals, who said it would be much better for the country if Don Pedro, the Queen's cousin, was on the throne.

—ELVIRA. (*aside*) Ah, this is worth knowing.

MANUEL. Upon which I told 'em it would be better still for the country if people would attend a little more to business, and a little less to politics; and that, for my part, I thought she was very much to be pitied.

—ELVIRA. Pitied! What for?

MANUEL. Why, for having such a parcel of fools to reign over: upon which one of 'em called me a saucy impudent fellow——

—ELVIRA. And you replied——

—MANUEL. By a most convincing argument—I knocked him down!

—ELVIRA. (*aside*) Evidently great decision of character! What an invaluable president of the council he'll make. (*aloud*) But perhaps the poor man was right.

MANUEL. Not he; give her time to know her business—that's but fair. It takes some time to learn how to drive a pair of mules, and that's a precious deal easier than handling the reins of government.

—ELVIRA. (*aside*) How capitally he does it.

MANUEL. But hang politics, let's talk of something else—you, for instance.

—ELVIRA. Me! (*aside*) Now for it.

MANUEL. Do you know you're very pretty? but of course you do.

ELVIRA. Not I indeed!

—MANUEL. Now don't tell fibs—there's only one fault I can see in you.

—ELVIRA. (*aside*) A fault! yet my courtiers tell me I am absolute perfection. (*aloud*) Well, and and that one fault is?——

MANUEL. Your nose! I object to your nose! (*ELVIRA unconsciously puts her hand on her nose*) If you had got somebody else's nose, you'd be a splendid creature! Perhaps it would be all the better if there was a little more of you, but you can't help that! You're just the sort of woman I should like to make a wife of if I wanted one, which I don't.

—ELVIRA. Indeed! Are you quite sure that you are not looking out for a wife at this very moment?

MANUEL. (*aside*) Come, that's a pretty broad hint! (*aloud*) Well, I don't mean to say that I've exactly registered an oath against matrimony.

—ELVIRA. Ha, ha! I thought as much!

MANUEL. (*aside*) She thought as much! (*aloud*) Do you know the more I look at you the more convinced I feel that you would make a capital little wife.

—ELVIRA. (*aside*) Oh if he only knew who he was speaking to.

—MANUEL. I'm tolerably well to do in the world.

—ELVIRA. (*aside*) Her presumptive to the crown of Castille.

—MANUEL. And not absolutely ill-looking. (*gradually putting his arm round her waist*)

—ELVIRA. (*aside*) Oh, if he wasn't my intended husband, how indignant I should feel.

MANUEL. Then I've two rich old maiden aunts in Segovia, who'd provide for all our children—I know they would, though we had a dozen. (*ELVIRA withdraws herself from his arm*) But somehow or other, there's something in your eyes, your voice, your manner that inspires respect as well as love. I should have kissed any other woman but you, twenty times before this.

—ELVIRA. Twenty times! (*aside*) I'm afraid his morals are in a sad state.

MANUEL. But from you, I wouldn't dare to ask a kiss, much less take one! You'd never pardon me?

—ELVIRA. It isn't very polite in you to think me more unforgiving than the rest of my sex.

MANUEL. Ah!

—*Kisses ELVIRA, she runs from him, he turns away laughing, at this moment DON PEDRO followed by DON SCIPIO and COUNT TORRIBO, appear at back, L. U. E.*

PEDRO. (*seeing ELVIRA and starting*) Eh! no—can it be?

—ELVIRA. Ah! *Runs into the posada.*

—MANUEL. (*calling after her*) Stop—stop, one word more!

—PEDRO. (*stopping him*) Who was that?

MANUEL. That?—what?

PEDRO. That young person?

MANUEL. A woman!

PEDRO. I know that.

MANUEL. Then why do you ask?

PEDRO. Pshaw! Who is she?

MANUEL. Don't know.

PEDRO. What is she?

MANUEL. Can't tell.

COUNT. Your vocabulary, sir, is not on a very extensive scale.

MANUEL. I don't talk much, but what I do say is to the purpose.

COUNT. Remarkably so! Short and emphatic!

MANUEL. But, as you seem curious about this young woman, all I can say is, that I know nothing at all about her. Is there any more information I can give you.

COUNT. More information! (*to DON PEDRO*) He says, more information!

PEDRO. By St. Jago! I think the fellow's laughing at me. (*goes up, R., looks after ELVIRA*)

COUNT. (*to MANUEL*) He says he thinks you're laughing at him.

MANUEL. He's perfectly welcome to his opinion.

COUNT. He says he's perfectly welcome to his opinion.

MANUEL. I rather suspect there's mischief brewing here—Good day, Senor Cavaliers. (*takes off his cap to DON PEDRO, who turns on his heel*—MANUEL *angrily to COUNT*) Your friend isn't very civil.

COUNT. No, but I am—I'm civility itself—good bye! (*shaking MANUEL'S hand*) Remember me at home.

MANUEL. I shall not forget you.

Exit into inn.

COUNT. Oblige me by remembering me at home. (*shouting after him, then hurrying to DON PEDRO*) Now, your Highness, why this emotion? Has anything disturbed you?

PEDRO. (*C. grasping a hand each of COUNT and SCIPIO, and in a mysterious undertone*) Did you not observe?

COUNT. (R.) Of course I did!—What?

PEDRO. The extraordinary resemblance?

COUNT. It struck me directly. Between who?

PEDRO. That young peasant girl—she's her very image!

COUNT. So she is—I said so the moment I saw her. Whose very image?

PEDRO. The Queen's. but, pshaw! this is absurd!

COUNT. Absurd to a degree.

PEDRO. I must be mad. (*crossing L. and back to C.*)

COUNT. Very mad, indeed.

SCIPIO. (L.) Her Majesty would scarcely suffer herself to be embraced by a common Muleteer in the public road, in the open day! Oh, no—no—no!

COUNT. Oh, no—no—no!

PEDRO. I'd give a hundred thousand dollars that it were the Queen! nay, I'd give ten years of my life.

COUNT. I'd do more—I'd give twenty years of your life.

PEDRO. But you must have remarked this extraordinary resemblance. (*to DON SCIPIO*)

SCIPIO. Your Highness forgets that I am not familiar with her Majesty's features, for on the very day of her accession to the throne, I departed for the Court of Castille, by your Highness' orders, on a certain secret mission.

PEDRO. True! Well—the result? Speak!

COUNT. Speak.

PEDRO. (*to COUNT*) Silence!

COUNT. (*to SCIPIO*) Silence!

PEDRO. (*to COUNT*) Go and keep watch that we are not interrupted; we must have no listeners—go. (*COUNT retires, and during the following looks cautiously about*) Now, Don Scipio.

SCIPIO. In obedience to your Highness' commands I arrived at the Court of Castille——

COUNT. (*at back*) Somebody's coming. (*PEDRO and SCIPIO separate*) No—it's all right.

SCIPIO. The King was absent from his capital——

PEDRO. Capital!

COUNT. (*at back*) Capital! (*PEDRO and SCIPIO turn*) I only said capital!

SCIPIO. Which gave me an immediate opportunity of conferring with his royal brother, Don Sancho.

PEDRO. Well—well—

COUNT. Somebody's coming! No, it's all right again! I thought it was a man, but I find it's the stump of a tree!

PEDRO. Pshaw! Come here: you're continually shouting "Somebody's coming" when there's nobody coming.

COUNT. (R.) You told me to look out, so I thought I ought to see something whether I did or not.

PEDRO. (to SCIPIO) Now, touching this rival of mine?

SCIPIO. He is no longer your rival.

PEDRO. Ah! What do you mean? Speak—I'm on thorns.

COUNT. He says he's on thorns! and anything more uncomfortable I can't imagine.

PEDRO. Will you hold your stupid tongue?

SCIPIO. In the first interview I had with Don Sancho, his Highness told me that it was against his inclination that the King, his brother, had affianced him to your royal cousin; that his affections had been long engaged to a charming lady, to whom he was secretly betrothed, and whom he had determined to marry that very day.

PEDRO. (*triumphantly*) Ah! ah!

COUNT. Ah! ah!

PEDRO. And this marriage—

SCIPIO. Took place: I was present at the ceremony.

COUNT. He was present at the ceremony!

SCIPIO. And gave the lady away.

COUNT. And gave the lady away!

PEDRO. This is news indeed—this is something like.

COUNT. Very like indeed!

PEDRO. Then this romantic project, attributed to Don Sancho, of visiting our royal cousin in the disguise of a muleteer—

SCIPIO. Is knocked on the head.

COUNT. Is knocked on the head!

SCIPIO. For when the king returned and found his brother married, and his favourite scheme frustrated, his royal fury knew no bounds. Don Sancho was arrested, Manuel, the real muleteer, took his departure as usual, and I made my escape as quickly as possible.

COUNT. The very thing I should have done! and quicker than possible—if possible!

PEDRO. Don Sancho married! Now, my fair cousin, your hand or your throne is mine! but hush! some one comes.

COUNT. I told you somebody was coming, but you wouldn't believe me.

PEDRO. A country lad! well thought of, I'll question him about this young peasant girl—for spite of myself, that marvellous resemblance still haunts and perplexes me.

COUNT. (*soothingly*) I see it does.

Enter CARMEN, R. U. E.

PEDRO. It—it irritates me! (*pushing COUNT aside*)

COUNT. I feel it does! (*rubbing his shoulder*)

(*by this time, CARMEN has approached and sees DON PEDRO*)

CARMEN. (R., *aside*) Don Pedro! Oh, lud! it's all over with me and the Queen too! (*going*)

PEDRO. (L. C.) Approach, youthful rustic. (*she hesitates*) Are you afraid?

CARMEN. Afraid?—of the likes of you?—not I! (*attempting to whistle, at the same time cutting a stick with knife, and crossing to L. corner and back to R. C.*)

COUNT. The youthful rustic is trying to get up a whistle, and a melancholy attempt it is!

PEDRO. Tell me—there was a young female peasant here just now?

CARMEN. A young female peasant?—you don't mean mother!

PEDRO. Pshaw!

CARMEN. Then, 'twas grandmother!

COUNT. Mind what you are about, young man—we're not to be imposed upon. We're not going to take it for granted you ever had a grandmother, much less a mother! I repeat, much less a mother!

PEDRO. Answer me, rustic! are you a native of these parts?

CARMEN. (*stupidly*) What parts?

PEDRO. Pshaw! were you born here?

CARMEN. Here?—I think I was, but I don't remember much about it—I was so very young at the time.

COUNT. Poo! poo! no prevarication, youthful rustic—how are we to know that you were ever born at all?

PEDRO. Pshaw! there was a young peasant girl here just now, who bore an extraordinary resemblance to—the Queen?

CARMEN. Oh, now I know!—you mean Cousin Jacintha; for my part I don't see the likeness—not that I ever saw the Queen. (*crosses, L.*)

PEDRO. Who is she? What is she?

CARMEN. Oh, she; she lives with uncle in that little cottage yonder.

COUNT. Cottage! I don't see any cottage! (*goes up and looks off, L.*)

CARMEN. No, but you'll see it plain enough if you'll just climb up to the top of that big tree.

PEDRO. Go fetch the girl here!

CARMEN. Oh, she's gone! I met her just now running up that high mountain—there she runs!

Pointing off—PEDRO, SCIPIO, and COUNT, look off, L. U. E., at this moment ELVIRA enters from inn.

The Queen! (*hastily to ELVIRA*) We are lost, madam!

ELVIRA. Hush! leave all to me.

PEDRO. (*coming down, R. C.*) Ah! (*involuntarily takes off his hat and seems bewildered by the resemblance*)

COUNT. (*advancing, L.*) What is the matter your Highness? (*suddenly seeing ELVIRA and also taking off his hat*) Ah!

SCIPIO. (*advancing, R.*) I can't see anything of her! (*seeing ELVIRA and taking off his hat*) Ah!

PEDRO. It's perfectly extraordinary!

SCIPIO. Quite marvellous!

COUNT. Absolutely astounding!

ELVIRA. (*with a slight assumption of rustic gawkiness*) Why what's the matter, senors? How you stare at a body! you look so silly, ha, ha! (*aside to CARMEN*) Laugh!

CARMEN. Ha, ha! (*laughs stupidly*)

PEDRO. (*half familiarly and half respectfully, twiddling his hat about, putting it on and taking it off again, in which action DON SCIPIO and the COUNT imitate him*) The fact is—you bear so striking, so marvellous a resemblance to—

ELVIRA. To the Queen, eh? so I've been told scores of times. She must be a very good-looking woman.

PEDRO. (*with indifference*) Yes, but not to be compared with you.

COUNT. No, not to be compared with you.

ELVIRA. Go along do! (*giving COUNT a nudge in the side*)

CARMEN. (L.) Yes, go along do! (*poking him on the other side, COUNT retires up L. round to R.*)

ELVIRA. Ha, ha! What fun! Oh, dear, dear! if I was only a queen in fact as well as features.

PEDRO. Well, what would you do?

ELVIRA. Do? I wouldn't do anything! no more should my subjects—except dance, sing, laugh, and be happy! (*takes stage, L.*)

PEDRO. (*aside*) My Lords, a sudden idea has struck me!

COUNT. (C.) Where?—I mean, what?

PEDRO. This peasant girl must go with us; that very resemblance which has struck us so forcibly, shall serve my projects against the Queen.

ELVIRA. (*aside*) Indeed! thanks, Cousin Pedro, for putting me on my guard.

PEDRO. (*crosses, C.*) Come with us to Murcia, your fortunes shall be my especial care.

COUNT. (R. C.) You hear, young woman! no end of enjoyment, with nothing to do, and lots of time to do it in.

CARMEN. (L., *aside to ELVIRA*) Of course you'll refuse.

ELVIRA. Refuse to become a conspirator against myself! not I indeed! (*aloud*) Senors, I consent.

PEDRO. Come then. (*crosses to C. and takes ELVIRA's hand*)

Enter MANUEL and PEASANTS from inn, others from various entrances.

MANUEL. Holloa! What does all this mean?

ELVIRA. (*aside*) Don Sancho!

PEDRO. It means that this fair and interesting creature has accepted our escort to Murcia.

MANUEL. Murcia! that's where I'm going.

ELVIRA. (*aside, archly*) Exactly!

MANUEL. (*trying to conceal his annoyance*) Well, of course, the young woman can do as she likes, but there's a dozen or two as ill

looking rascals as I ever set eyes on, hanging about this spot—that's all.

PEDRO. (*aside*) They are my ill looking raseals. (*aloud*) In that case, our protection will be surer than yours.

MANUEL. I don't know that. How strong is your party?

PEDRO. Three!

MANUEL. Then that's just three less than mine, for I'm worth six of you any day.

PEDRO. } An insult! (*drawing their swords*)

SCIPIO. } (*pretending that he can't get his sword out*)

ELVIRA. (*crosses to C.*) Nay, pray don't quarrel for my sake.—Farewell, Señor Muleteer. (*archly*) Who knows but we may soon meet again!

Music.—Goes up with DON PEDRO, and down the valley. SCIPIO and COUNT follow.

CARMEN. (*aside to MANUEL*) On to Murcia, the Queen is surrounded by enemies. (*follows the QUEEN*)

MANUEL. The little woman in danger! I'm off—Holloa, Master Pablo! my mules—quick. (*music forte*) *Exit, R. U. E.*

The first four lines of the chorus is sung again. The PEASANT WOMEN take up their baskets, &c., shake hands with one another, and exit at various entrances as the Drop descends.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Scene represents a magnificent Chamber in the Palace; arch, R., leading to the terrace, with fountains; and arch, L., leading into the Palace. Trumpets at the rising of the curtain, distant, accompanied by shouts and firing of cannon.*

DON PEDRO discovered at back, looking off towards L.; DON SCIPIO near him.

PEDRO. (*advancing and angrily*) D'ye hear how the poor blind besotted citizens welcome my royal eousin? “Long live the Queen!” “The Queen for ever!”

SCIPIO. Nay; the more blind and besotted they are the more likely they are to ery “Long live the King!” “The King for ever!”

PEDRO. Hush! But where is Count Torribio? Why is he not here? I almost wish I had entrusted the custody of that young peasant girl to other hands.

SCIPIO. He said he would answer for her safe keeping with his head.

PEDRO. He did; but I've not much faith in the security. Ah! he comes.

Enter COUNT, very pale and agitated, but trying to look quite composed, L.

So, Count, you're here at last?

COUNT. Yes, I am here. (*aside*) And I heartily wish I was anywhere else!

PEDRO. Have you executed my orders? This peasant girl, Jacintha, is she safe?

COUNT. Yes. (*aside*) It's her own fault if she isn't, for I'd no sooner got her in my hands than she slipped through my fingers!

PEDRO. Then I will at once communicate to you the particulars of my proud enterprise, in which this said Jacintha is to play so prominent—so important a part. (*the COUNT staggers and leans on DON PEDRO for support*) What's the matter—are you unwell?

COUNT. (*trying to look composed*) Oh, dear, no! It's only the intense heat—I mean the excessive cold! (*aside*) I feel considerably more dead than alive! (*feeling his pulse and counting very rapidly*)

PEDRO. Listen. (*drawing COUNT and DON SCIPIO near him by the arm, in a very mysterious manner; the COUNT's arm shakes violently, in spite of his endeavours to keep it still*) How now—you're trembling from head to foot!

COUNT. Am I? It's nothing at all—it's a habit I've got!

PEDRO. Listen. The Queen, attended by her Court, has just arrived here, for a few hours only—at her favourite summer palace of Zamora. (*looks cautiously about him—then again taking the COUNT and DON SCIPIO by the arm—the former trembling as violently as before*) In the meantime the principal posts in the palace at Murcia will be secured, so that when my royal cousin returns, attended by an escort of my providing, she will find herself a prisoner in my hands.

SCIPIO. Admirable! Your Highness is a first-rate general.

COUNT. A great scoundrel! I mean a great creature—an enormous creature!

PEDRO. I will then inform her, that Don Sancho is married to another, and give her one day to decide whether she'll accept my hand, or abdicate her crown.

SCIPIO. Should she refuse?

PEDRO. Then we must have recourse to her living portrait, and our fair ally, the young peasant girl, now in your safe custody. (*laying his hand on COUNT's shoulder, who again staggers*) A few days will sufficiently prepare her for the part she has to play, and then we will present her to her subjects, who, cheated by her marvellous resemblance to their Queen, will hear from her lips, her formal abdication of the crown in my favour.

COUNT. (*aside*) When he knows I've let her go, he'll be in a state of eruption, that's perfectly dreadful to think of.

SCIPIO. But in the meantime, the Queen herself—

PEDRO. Will be safely immured in a convent, of which I alone shall keep the key. (*goes up*)

SCIPIO. The success is certain. (*goes up, L.*)

COUNT. (*aside*) Is it! (*goes up, R.*)

~~ELVIRA in an elegant equestrian costume of the period enters, L., attended by DONNA CARMEN and MAIDS OF HONOUR in similar costumes, at the head of whom is DONNA BEATRIX DI POMPOLO, also in an equestrian costume; following these are ROYAL PAGES—ELVIRA seats herself.~~

PEDRO. (*aside to COUNT*) I could swear it was Jacintha, but that I know you have her safe under lock and key. (*goes up to ELVIRA*)

The COUNT staggers again, &c. &c. BEATRIX comes down.

PEDRO. (*aside to COUNT*) Well, Count, what do you think of me? How do I look?

COUNT. Very majestic! (*aside*) and very uncomfortable.

BEAT. As principal Lady of the Bedchamber, I couldn't think of letting these young, wild, giddy Maids of Honour out of my sight; so, I donned the equestrian costume, which I flatter myself, does justice to my figure. (*goes up*)

COUNT. Ample justice; it makes the most of it, I assure you. (*the COUNTESS sweeps round, and joins the MAIDS OF HONOUR*)

PEDRO. Your Majesty's loyal subjects of Zamora, request to be admitted to your presence.

ELVIRA. By all means; but we claim a few minutes' repose after our journey; in a short time our palace gates will be thrown open to one and all.

Exeunt DON PEDRO, SCIPIO and COUNT, R. arch, leaving ELVIRA, DONNA BEATRIX, CARMEN and MAIDS OF HONOUR.

ELVIRA. Are they gone?

CARMEN. They are, your Majesty.

~~ELVIRA. (*rising and with great solemnity*) Liberty! liberty! (*jumps from her chair—the MAIDS OF HONOUR run about the stage laughing, dancing, &c.*)~~

BEAT. Young ladies, young ladies! a little more decorum!

ELVIRA. Decorum—when we are alone? We don't know the meaning of the word—do we, ladies?

GIRLS. No—no—no! (*the MAIDS OF HONOUR run about playing together, ELVIRA joins in their amusements*)

BEAT. (*dropping into a chair*) The world's at an end!

Enter MANUEL, R. arch.

One of the male sex! A man! Horror!

ELVIRA. The Prince has followed me—I knew he would. (*aside*)

BEAT. Begone! fly! Ladies, remove him! (*goes up*)

MANUEL. Oh, madam, your pardon! (*kneeling*) Eh?—no! Can it be? (*seeing ELVIRA*)

ELVIRA. Well, Señor Muleteer, have you ought to say?

MANUEL. (*aside*) Her very voice! If the little woman ever had a sister, I saw her yesterday, in the shape of that young peasant girl.

ELVIRA. (*to MANUEL*) How came you here—and for what purpose?

BEAT. Yes, young man, for what horrible purpose?

MANUEL. Nay, my dear good old lady.

BEAT. Don't come near me!

MANUEL. Be silent! I have had trouble enough in obtaining admission to Her Majesty's presence, and Madam, I have that to say (to ELVIRA) which must be for your ear alone.

ELVIRA. (*aside to CARMEN*) I suspect as much. Retire, Ladies!

LADIES *exeunt*, L. *arch.*

BEAT. Your Majesty! and leave your Majesty alone, with a mysterious Muleteer—never!

ELVIRA. Silence, Countess, and obey!

BEAT. Your Majesty! (*crosses to, L.*) Your Majesty! Your—

Exit, L.

(*a sign of intelligence passes between CARMEN and ELVIRA, CARMEN remains at back, partly concealed*)

ELVIRA. (*aside*) I presume he's going to throw off the mask. (*aloud*) Well, senor, what have you to say?

MANUEL. (*after looking cautiously about him*) In the first place—your secret is safe. I haven't said a word about it to anybody, and I won't! on the honour of a Muleteer, I won't!

ELVIRA. (*pretending astonishment*) My secret? What secret?

MANUEL. (*in a sort of loud whisper*) The village yonder, the disguise—the young peasant girl—yesterday.

ELVIRA. What are you talking about?

MANUEL. Not that there is any harm in a Queen leaving her Court, and taking a little fresh country air in the disguise of a peasant girl, as your Majesty did yesterday.

ELVIRA. I? you must have been dreaming!

MANUEL. (*puzzled*) I begin to think I was, and that I'm fast asleep still! (*turns and finds himself close to DONNA CARMEN who during the above has advanced*) No, no, I'm not! for here—here's the identical long boy who was with your Majesty!

CARMEN. Long boy! I!

ELVIRA. (*laughing immoderately*) Ha, ha, ha!

CARMEN. The poor man must be mad, your Majesty!

MANUEL. But I have not yet fulfilled my errand here, your Majesty's safety is threatened!

ELVIRA. Ah!—How!—Speak!

MANUEL. (*rapidly*) A conspiracy has been formed against you; on your return to Murcia, your carriage will be surrounded, your person seized, and conveyed to a neighbouring convent!

ELVIRA. (*alarmed*) But you—you will save me—you will summon your friends—your escort—

MANUEL. My friends! my escort! I've no escort but my waggon, nor friends either but a couple of mules, that I'm aware of! but all that this right arm can do for your Majesty—

CARMEN. (*aside to him hastily*) Surely you will throw off the mask now?

MANUEL. Mask! (*feeling his face*)

CARMEN. Yes, your borrowed plumes.

MANUEL. Plumes! (*putting his hand on his head*)

—ELVIRA. (*who has been absorbed in reflection, aside suddenly*) I see my plan. (*touching her forehead*) Senor Muleteer, we thank you for your timely information! name your reward!

MANUEL. I ask but one—the privilege of serving your Majesty; let your enemies tremble, for I'll be amongst them.

Rushes out at back.

—ELVIRA. Stop! stop! oh, Carmen, if anything should happen to the Prince!

CARMEN. The Prince will take care of himself, madam. (*aside*) Princes always do. (*aloud*) But this dreadful—this horrible plot against your Majesty?

—ELVIRA. (*again touching her forehead*) Is half defeated already: summon my attendants. So—so, my Cousin Pedro, you would immure me in a convent; we shall see. (*CARMEN beckons*)

Enter the COUNTESS, MAIDS OF HONOUR, and two or three PAGES.

—Let Don Pedro be informed that we purpose returning to Murcia immediately. (*to PAGE*) Order our carriage to the palace gates, and our escort to be in readiness. *Exeunt PAGES.*

BEAT. Return to Murcia, without witnessing the festivities?—your Majesty's duty as a sovereign—

—ELVIRA. Yes, yes, I know; but I wasn't born to be a sovereign. (*aside*) Ah! happy thought! (*to CARMEN*) Carmen, my diadem and regal mantle! (*aloud*) Ah, Countess, nature intended the crown for a far nobler brow than mine—a majestic forehead like yours, Countess! (*with pretended admiration*)

BEAT. Oh, your Majesty! I shouldn't be surprised if it fitted me exactly!

—ELVIRA. (*aside to CARMEN*) The diadem! quick! (*CARMEN hands diadem*) Let me place it on this noble head?

—BEAT. No, no, I couldn't think of such a thing. (*bending her head forward*)

—ELVIRA. (*aside*) So it seems! (*aloud*) The regal mantle! (*goes up, L.*)

BEAT. Oh! your Majesty's condescension quite overpowers me! (*CARMEN throws the mantle over the COUNTESS*) I'm really quite ashamed. (*to CARMEN*) Does it hang gracefully behind? (*walking up C. in a dignified manner*)

—ELVIRA. Was there ever a more regal appearance?—a more dignified deportment?

CARMEN. } Never! never!—charming—beautiful!
MAIDS. }

—ELVIRA. Oh, Countess, if you would but take my place for a few hours—so that I might learn, from your majestic manner, how a queen ought to deport herself! (*suddenly*) Well thought of: our state carriage is now at the palace gates, this veil will conceal your noble features; pass through our apartment; occupy our place; receive the acclamations of our loving subjects, and teach me how a queen should respond to them. (*aside*) She'll do it!

BEAT. If your Majesty insists! (*aside*) I feel a queen all over!

ELVIRA. Quick! not a moment must be lost! Carmilla and Marcella, attend the Countess—I mean her Majesty!

ELVIRA and LADIES curtsy to COUNTESS, who moves grandly off the stage into palace, L. 1 E.

CARMEN. I see it all: the poor Countess takes your place in the carriage—

ELVIRA. And my place in the convent into the bargain, ha, ha, ha!
(music—she ascends the throne)

Enter DON PEDRO, DON SCIPIO, COUNT TORRIBIO, COURTIER, LADIES, CITIZENS OF ZAMORA, &c., from L.

ELVIRA. Good friends, we thank you for your cheering welcome, but regret we cannot remain to share in your festivities; but compelled by state affairs to return forthwith to Murcia, our noble and trusty cousin, Don Pedro, will represent us in our absence.

PEDRO. *(aside)* This will aid our plans.

ELVIRA. Good friends, farewell!

All bow as the QUEEN, with CARMEN and LADIES, exeunt, L. 1 E.

PEDRO. *(aside to SCIPIO)* Quick! mount your horse—you'll find the escort ready in the palace yard; I can trust them to a man—you know the rest—away!

DON SCIPIO hurries out at back.

Let the festivities proceed.

Ballet.

(during which DON PEDRO and COUNT retire to the back and appear to be watching the preparations for the QUEEN'S departure—as the ballet terminates, a loud flourish of trumpets is heard without)

PEDRO. *(taking off his hat)* The Queen enters her carriage!—let the last sound that falls on the ear of her Majesty, be the loyal cry of “Long live the Queen!”

Chorus.

Long live the Queen,
Long may she reign,
And every foe
Oppose her in vain;
With loyal hearts,
We sing again—
Long live the Queen,
Long may she reign.

At the end of Chorus, all exeunt, except DON PEDRO and COUNT TORRIBIO.

PEDRO. So far so good! in a few minutes the Queen will be safe within the walls of a convent; and then—then our little peasant girl, when properly instructed in the part she has to play, must do the rest! so produce her, Count. *(COUNT again staggers)* Produce her, my dear friend!

COUNT. Yes—of course—but you see, I don't happen to have her about me at this moment. *(about to run off)*

PEDRO. (*stopping him by the cloak*) Hark ye, Count Torribio de Pompolo, I'm not to be trifled with; you undertook to produce this girl when required, or forfeit your head! I now demand the girl, or, your head!—of the two, I should prefer the former.

COUNT. So should I, infinitely prefer it! (*about to start again*)

(*during the above, ELVIRA appears on the steps of the palace, in the costume in which she appeared in Act I.—She descends the steps, and when the COUNT turns, he finds himself face to face with ELVIRA—COUNT gives another stagger, and leans his head on DON PEDRO'S shoulder*)

PEDRO. Pshaw! (*seeing ELVIRA*) 'Tis she! (*to COUNT, and digging him in the side*) Ha, ha! I see it all! you're a wag, Count, ha, ha, ha!

COUNT. (*trying to laugh immoderately*) Oh, yes, I'm a wag! ha, ha!

PEDRO. You wanted to frighten me, eh? Ha, ha! Capital!

COUNT. Glorious! Ha, ha, ha! (*aside to ELVIRA*) Where the devil did you come from?

ELVIRA. I thought you might want me, so I came without being sent for.

PEDRO. (*angrily to COUNT*) Then she wasn't under lock and key?

ELVIRA. Yes, I was!

COUNT. You hear—she says, "Yes, she was."

ELVIRA. (*prompting COUNT*) But I made my escape—

COUNT. But she made her escape—

ELVIRA. (*prompting*) Through the keyhole!

COUNT. Through the keyhole.

ELVIRA. He's silly enough to believe anything! (*aside*)

COUNT. You're silly enough to believe anything. (*bows very low*)

ELVIRA. (*looks about her with pretended admiration*) Oh, how grand! how beautiful!

PEDRO. Should you like to live in such a palace, and to be dressed in silks and satins?

ELVIRA. Shouldn't I! You see I'm a bit of a coquette—but that's the only fault I've got!

PEDRO. And to be attended by swarms of servants?

ELVIRA. Oh, how nice! I'm rather inclined to be idle—but that's the only fault I've got.

PEDRO. All this and more shall be yours, if you'll assist me in carrying out a bold enterprise. Listen! The Queen is tired of the forms of state and the daily monotony of royalty, and has therefore determined upon abdicating her crown—hasn't she, Count?

COUNT. Yes; she told me so the other day.

PEDRO. In short, her anxious desire is to retire to the peaceful seclusion of a convent! But she still hesitates—fearful of the popular excitement that might attend her abdication—and—and so—

ELVIRA. You think I am sufficiently like her Majesty to take her place, and abdicate for her?

PEDRO. Exactly!

ELVIRA. And then—abdicate myself?

PEDRO. Precisely!

ELVIRA. Well—if our poor Queen really wishes to bury herself in a convent—

COUNT. She does! She told me so the other day!

ELVIRA. Then I consent!

PEDRO. But are you sure you'll be able to play your part?

ELVIRA. It can't be so very difficult after all. I should reward the virtuous, succour the unfortunate, and punish the wicked—conspirators especially. *(with a meaning look at DON PEDRO and the COUNT)*

COUNT. *(trying to laugh)* Conspirators? and what would you do to them?

ELVIRA. Cut off their heads!

Song.

I am only a simple village maid,
Wealth and rank are to me unknown;
And what's more, I am very much afraid
Better days I ne'er shall own.

No—no—no—no,

My fate I know.

But if I really were a Queen,
My greatest joy by far would be,
To feel that there had never been
A monarch more beloved than me;
But there's one crime—one crime alone,

I feel I never would forgive:
Conspirators against my throne,
Whate'er their rank, should cease to live!

But—I am only, &c. &c.

COUNT. *(with another slight stagger, and aside to DON PEDRO)*
I don't half like this! If this should be the queen herself after all?

PEDRO. Pshaw! 'Ere this the Queen is a prisoner. *(crosses to L.)*

DON SCIPIO *runs on, very pale and disordered, L.*

SCIPIO. Your Highness, we are lost—undone!

PEDRO. What mean you? Speak!

SCIPIO. The occupant of the royal carriage was not the Queen! Her Majesty is still here.

PEDRO. Perdition! *(looking anxiously at ELVIRA, who pretends to look very unconcerned)* Who—who was it then?

SCIPIO. The Countess di Pompolo. Your wife! *(to COUNT)*

PEDRO. (C.) Ah! betrayed—and by you, traitor! *(to COUNT)*

COUNT. Me! I'm as innocent as a lamb! *(aside to SCIPIO)* And when you found out it was my beloved Countess what did you do with her?

SCIPIO. Left her in the middle of the road. *(crosses to L.)*

COUNT. *(disappointed)* Oh, you didn't take her to the convent, and lock her up?

SCIPIO. Not I!

COUNT. You might just as well while you were about it. (*offended*)

PEDRO. (*who has been absorbed in reflection, suddenly to DON SCIPIO, who hurries out*) 'Tis a desperate step, but the only one left. (*aside to COUNT*) Let a priest be in readiness in the chapel. Your fears are well founded—it is the Queen. (*crosses, R.—COUNT nearly falls, and when unnoticed by DON PEDRO, bows most obsequiously to ELVIRA*)

ELVIRA. (*alarmed and aside*) Do they suspect I've discovered their treachery? Ah! (*starting at seeing DON SCIPIO, who returns followed by CONSPIRATORS, who range themselves near DON PEDRO*) Dare they offer violence? (*observing DON PEDRO and CONSPIRATORS whispering—COUNT endeavouring to attract the QUEEN's attention by his unceasing homage*)

PEDRO. (*in an ironical tone and manner, and taking ELVIRA's hand*) Senors! (*to SCIPIO, &c.*) In this humble, but fair young peasant girl, you behold my intended wife.

ELVIRA. (*alarmed, yet still assuming the manners of the peasant*) Oh, senor, you do me too much honour.

PEDRO. I am perfectly aware of the condescension on my part—(*ironically*)—but it suits my purpose to offer you my hand.

ELVIRA. What if I reject it, sir? (*unable to restrain her dignified manner and tone*)

PEDRO. Then I must speak more plainly, and tell you that—Queen or peasant—you must yield to a power greater than yours. A priest is now waiting in the royal chapel to join our hands—refuse, and you enter a convent for life. (*goes up, R.*)

ELVIRA. (*with a slight scream of terror*) Ah!

MANUEL. (*without*) Nonsense! I tell you it's no such thing.

ELVIRA. Ah! the prince's voice, Don Sancho, then I'm safe.

Enter MANUEL, at back, closely followed by the COUNTESS, L.

MANUEL. I tell you again, my good old lady, you owe me no thanks.

BEAT. No thanks! Didn't the ruffians leave me helpless in the middle of the mud—and didn't you rush to my rescue, sword in hand?

MANUEL. I was there to save another, at the hazard of my life. (*sees ELVIRA*) Ah! (*looking amazed*) Disguised again!

BEAT. (*sees ELVIRA*) Mercy on me! in that very undignified masquerade, do I behold—

PEDRO. Silence! Count, remove your wife.

COUNT. 'Tis very easy to say remove her—suppose you try.

PEDRO. Juan! (*on a sign from DON PEDRO, two of the CONSPIRATORS drag off the COUNTESS*)

BEAT. Help, help, Count! Husband, to the rescue!

Exit struggling.

COUNT. I will—I will!—(*aside to SCIPIO*) Hold me tight!—(*aloud*) Unhand me, unhand me, sir! (*pretending to struggle, then aside to SCIPIO*) Is she gone?—thank ye! (*shaking SCIPIO's hand*)

MANUEL. (*looking from one to the other—to DON PEDRO*) What's all this going on here! (*to ELVIRA*) Speak, madam, my life is yours!

ELVIRA. (*still assuming the peasant girl*) Your life! Lor, sir, what should I do with it? (*crosses to L.*)

MANUEL. (*aside to ELVIRA*) I understand your Majesty—(*aloud*) Here, tuck yourself under my arm, young woman, I'll take care of you!

PEDRO. Nay, Senor Muleteer, no protection is needed, I love yon rustic beauty, and wish to marry her. What have you to say to that?

MANUEL. (*angrily*) What have I to say to that? why—(*aside to ELVIRA*) What have I to say to that?

ELVIRA. (*prompting him*) So do you!

MANUEL. So do I!

PEDRO. She will refuse your hand as she did mine.

ELVIRA. How do you know? you see he does not offer me his hand.

MANUEL. Yes I do! (*aside to her*) In joke, of course, your Majesty. (*holds out his hand*)

ELVIRA. I accept it! (*places her hand in MANUEL'S*)

PEDRO. Good! the priest who attended by my command, will join your hands at once.

MANUEL. Eh!—oh—ha—ha! (*drops ELVIRA'S hand*)

ELVIRA. (*aside*) As he is my intended husband, it's a deal of time and trouble saved. (*goes up*)

MANUEL. (*aside*) Well, considering this can only be a joke, it's beginning to look rather serious. (*follows QUEEN up*)

SCIPIO. What does this mean? (*aside to DON PEDRO*)

COUNT. Yes, what does this mean?

PEDRO. Don't you see?

COUNT. Of course I do—what?

PEDRO. That the Queen's degrading marriage with a muleteer, once made public, will be the signal for her downfall, and my triumph! Come, happy couple, the priest awaits you.

ELVIRA smiles and places her hand in MANUEL'S, and as they go up the stage, with DON PEDRO, SCIPIO, COUNT, and CONSPIRATORS following, the Scene closes.

SCENE II.—An Oratory in the Palace.

Enter DONNA CARMEN, C. D.

CARMEN. They have entered the chapel, and the Queen is being married! not to a simple Muleteer, as they imagine, but to Don Sancho, brother to the king of Castille, the man she loves. Happy Queen!

Enter COUNT TORRIBIO, C.

COUNT. I haven't quite made up my mind yet! is it really the Queen, or is it only a peasant girl? (*sees DONNA CARMEN*) Ah! here's her Majesty's favourite maid of honour, Donna Carmen—if I could only pump this secret out of her! she's a fine creature,

and of course open to flattery. You're remarkably lovely to-day! I don't know which to admire most, the lily on your cheek, or the rose on your nose—I mean your lips. Strange goings on, eh? rather a mysterious proceeding altogether—umph! (*in a sort of half whisper*)

CARMEN. Strange goings on!

COUNT. This sudden marriage of her Majesty, for of course it is the Queen.

CARMEN. Who can observe her dignified deportment and doubt it?

COUNT. Of course—of course!

CARMEN. And yet there are times when a certain awkwardness of manner at once betrays the peasant girl.

COUNT. There is, there is! In fact you have come to the conclusion that it is not the Queen, eh?

CARMEN. Not I, for her noble brow seems formed to wear a diadem.

COUNT. So it does! (*aside*) It is the Queen.

CARMEN. And yet, would she—could she have married a common Muleteer?

COUNT. Of course not! (*aside*) It's the peasant girl.

Enter an OFFICER, L.

OFFICER. (*to CARMEN*) Your pardon, senora, I wish to speak with you alone!

CARMEN. You'll excuse me, Count?

COUNT. Don't stand on any ceremony with me I beg. (*the OFFICER signifies to CARMEN to get rid of him*)

CARMEN. Will you oblige me by——(*pointing off, c.*)

COUNT. Oh, by——(*imitating the action*)

CARMEN. You told me not to stand on any ceremony with you! (*smiling*)

COUNT. I did—and to do you justice, you don't!

Exit, c.

CARMEN. Now, sir!

OFFICER. A royal courier has this moment arrived with this letter for her Majesty from the king of Castille.

CARMEN. From the king of Castille?

OFFICER. It must immediately be presented to her Majesty.

CARMEN. Not a moment shall be lost, I will seek the Queen.

OFFICER bows and exit, L:

CARMEN *hurrying off c., is met by DON PEDRO, followed closely by*

COUNT.

PEDRO. (*stopping CARMEN*) Her Majesty cannot be seen.

CARMEN. (*hastily concealing letter*) Not by me, her favourite maid of honor?

PEDRO. Not even by you!

COUNT. Not even by you!

PEDRO. No one can, or shall approach her until a certain important ceremony is completed.

COUNT. (*aside to DON PEDRO*) The abdication?

PEDRO. Exactly! (*to DONNA CARMEN*) You may retire.

COUNT. You hear that, young woman, you may retire. (*pointing*

off, imitating CARMEN's previous manner to him) Will you oblige me by— (*pointing off*) You see, I don't stand on any ceremony with you—you didn't with me. (*points off again*)

CARMEN. (*aside*) She shall have the letter.

Exit, L.

Enter an OFFICER of the Household, c.

OFFICER. Her Majesty the Queen!

COUNT. (*in a state of bewilderment*) Which Majesty? Which Queen?

PEDRO. Pshaw! You're going out of your senses. *Exit, R.*

COUNT. Well, I shan't have far to go that's one comfort.

Music.—Enter ELVIRA, followed by DON SCIPIO and four LORDS.

ELVIRA's costume is regal, but without her crown and royal mantle.

ELVIRA. Thanks, noble cavaliers: I'm sure I'm very much obliged to you. (*the COURTIERs bow, ELVIRA bows a low curtsey*) Where's my husband? He's a fine man, isn't he? Don't you think he's a fine man, sir? (*stupidly*)

PEDRO. Madam, cease this masquerade, it is a waste of time. The terms of your abdication are here, madam. (*presenting paper*)

ELVIRA. (*archly*) And what if I were to become a Queen in deed as well as name, and refuse to abdicate? Ha, ha! you never thought of that.

COUNT. Ah! you never thought of that.

PEDRO. You are mistaken. Refuse, and this degrading marriage with a low-born Muleteer, contracted but a few moments since in our presence, shall at once be made public, and that, madam, will render any voluntary abdication on your part unnecessary.

COUNT. Quite unnecessary!

PEDRO. Follow me, my lords!

Exit, angrily, followed by DON SCIPIO, COUNT, and COURTIERs, c.

ELVIRA. (*looking after DON PEDRO*) How I could have astonished you, my clever, plotting cousin! Here comes the Prince. Of course he'll not think it necessary to carry on his assumed character any longer.

Enter MANUEL, L. I E.

MANUEL. I am at length permitted to approach your Majesty. Oh, madam! is not my present happiness a dream—a cruel mockery?

ELVIRA. No, Manuel, there's no escape for either of us: we are really and truly married! (*smiling—a pause; they each seem to wait for the other to speak; ELVIRA then, with a slight symptom of impatience*) Well?

MANUEL. Your Majesty!

ELVIRA. Go on!

MANUEL. Go on?

ELVIRA. Have you nothing to say? nothing to confess? no secrets to confide to me—one especially?

MANUEL. Secret?

ELVIRA. Tell me, Manuel—by-the-bye, do you particularly care

about being called *Manuel*? There are many other names I should prefer—one particularly!

MANUEL. I care but for one, madam—that of your husband. *(gradually raising her hand to his lips and kissing it; then suddenly)* Pardon, pardon! *(receding)*

ELVIRA. *(smiling)* What for? *(leaning affectionately on MANUEL'S arm)* Surely this masquerade has lasted long enough—or are you determined not to reveal yourself until you stand face to face with my treacherous cousin, Don Pedro, and his confederates! Ha, ha! what will be their dismay when, standing in the midst of them, you crush their ambitious hopes with these simple words, “I am the?”—— “I am the?”—— Well, why don't you go on?

MANUEL. Your pardon, madam, if I do not understand you; surely it is yourself who have a mystery to confide to me—the motive of that condescension which could induce the Queen of Murcia to bestow her hand on a simple muleteer!

ELVIRA. This is sheer obstinacy! I will tell you: I chose you, because I saw you were—good looking; because I believed you to be brave, generous—faithful—loyal; and because I knew you to be—Don Sancho de Cordova, Prince of Castille! ha, ha! *(triumphantly)*

MANUEL. The Prince of Castille?—I?—you are mistaken, madam.

ELVIRA. Mistaken! no, no, I cannot—will not believe you!

Enter CARMEN, hastily, L. D.

CARMEN. Madam! an Envoy from the King of Castille has just arrived with this letter. *(delivers letter—retires up, c.)*

ELVIRA. *(crosses c.)* From the King! *(hurriedly tearing open the letter, and reading)* I am cheated—betrayed! The Prince of Castille is married to another!

CARMEN. Married! *(suddenly to MANUEL)* Then who, sir, are you?

ELVIRA. The husband of the Queen of Murcia!—Manuel the Muleteer! *(hysterically, and hiding her face on CARMEN'S shoulder)* I am lost—undone!

MANUEL. Not so, madam: you have been the victim of error to me—a cruel error—but fear not, your throne shall suffer no dishonour. Farewell. *(crosses, L.)*

ELVIRA. Stay! Manuel! I implore!

MANUEL. Nay, why should I remain here? you have robbed me of the only joy that could make life happy. Alas, it was the Prince, and not the man, to whom you gave your love. Madam—farewell!

ELVIRA. I gave my love to the man who received my plighted troth at the altar. Manuel, you shall not leave me! It is the wife, not the Queen, who speaks. Manuel! Husband! Do not leave me—for Prince or Muleteer—I love you! *(throwing herself into MANUEL'S arms)*

Enter DON PEDRO, DON SCIPIO, and COUNT, c.

PEDRO. Health and happiness to the royal pair! *(to ELVIRA)* Madam, your Court and people are assembled—the ceremony waits you.

MANUEL. Remember, this abdication is forced upon you. (*aside to ELVIRA*)

ELVIRA. (*aside to MANUEL*) What shall I do?

MANUEL. (*aside*) Your duty! In the name of your noble ancestors—for the sake of your people—let it be seen that you have the spirit to resent an injury, and the courage to preserve your dignity! Do this, madam, and heaven will do the rest.

ELVIRA. Pray do not leave me.

MANUEL. Fear not, I shall be near. *Exit, L. 1 E.*

PEDRO. (*offering his hand to ELVIRA—satirically, and aside to her*) Your Majesty has had ample time to study the terms of your voluntary abdication.

ELVIRA. I shall have my lesson by heart, cousin, be assured. (*she is led out by DON PEDRO*)

SCIPIO. (*to COUNT*) Our triumph is now secure. *Exit, c.*

COUNT. (*following SCIPIO and to himself*) I am not so sure of that. *Exit, c.*

SCENE III.—*The Throne Room in the Palace of Zamora brilliantly illuminated and gorgeous in decoration.*

ELVIRA with her crown and regal mantle is seated on the throne, surrounded by her COURT in brilliant costumes. OFFICERS of the Court and SOLDIERS occupy the sides, and at the back are crowds of PEOPLE in holiday costume. The various TRADES are assembled, and among them the MULETEERS; immediately about the throne are DON PEDRO, DON SCIPIO, and COUNT TORRIBIO; CARMEN is behind the throne with the other MAIDS OF HONOUR.

ELVIRA. (*rising from the throne and holding a paper in her hand*) Grandees of Spain! Nobles! and People of Murcia! You are assembled here to bear witness to an important ceremony. To hear from the lips of your Queen her voluntary abdication of her crown!

PEOPLE. (*murmuring*) Abdication! (*speaking among themselves*)

PEDRO. (*aside to SCIPIO*) Nothing can be better.

SCIPIO. (*aside to COUNT*) As I said before, our triumph is secure!

COUNT. (*aside*) And as I said before, I'm not so sure of that!

ELVIRA. (*shewing paper*) The terms of that abdication are here! but that abdication I never will pronounce. (*tears paper*)

OMNES. Long live the Queen! Long live the Queen!

(*a loud shout is raised by the PEOPLE*)

PEDRO. Perdition!—People of Murcia—I must, I will be heard! Let justice be done on me if I speak falsely; but let not the Queen escape. The Queen, who now stands before you—dishonoured by a degrading marriage—

OMNES. A marriage!

PEDRO. Aye, a disgraceful marriage, contracted not an hour since, with one Manuel, a Muleteer!

OMNES. A Muleteer! (*loud murmurs*)

MANUEL. (*entering*) True, Don Pedro—and that Muleteer stands before you! (*murmurs repeated among the PEOPLE*)

PEDRO. You hear, people of Murcia, I spoke the truth!

MANUEL. But not the whole truth—it was the Prince of Castille to whom the Queen believed she gave her hand.

PEDRO. The prince is married to another.

MANUEL. And so betrayed his brother's trust. But the king's word was pledged, and that word the king himself resolved should be respected.

PEDRO. (*sarcastically*) The king will arrive too late.

MANUEL. You are mistaken, sir! Guards!

Goes up to throne, GUARDS enter arch, R.

On your knees, traitor, and sue for pardon.

PEDRO. Pardon! from whom?

MANUEL. The husband of your Queen! Sebastian, king of Castille!
(*general amazement*)

OMNES. The king! (*loud shouts from COURTIERs and PEOPLE*)

At a sign from MANUEL the OFFICER crosses to DON PEDRO, who delivers his sword, then ditto to DON SCIPIO and COUNT, during which the Chorus sing

Our loyal voices let us raise,
In this gay festive scene,
And sing our gracious monarch's praise,
Long live our king and queen.

Curtain.

Costumes.

DON PEDRO.—Black velvet shoes, silk stockings, white satin embroidered trunks below the knee, jacket to match, ruff, trunks puffed with crimson, black velvet hat, white feather, black moustache and pointed beard, hair close; crimson cloak.

SCIPIO.—Brown suit, in the same style, puffed with black and gold, hat to match, blue feather.

TORRIBIO.—Light blue suit trimmed with cherry-coloured satin, cherry silk stockings, shoes, blue cloak, black hat and pink feather.

LORDS.—Various, Spanish.

PEASANTS.—Various.

MANUEL.—Red tights, claret gaiters, black shoes, black velvet tunic jacket and full trunks, trimmed with blue and gold, red and claret scarf on shoulder, and black hat.

ELVIRA.—*First Dress*—Maize silk under skirt, trimmed with claret velvet, white silk over skirt, claret fringe and bows, and claret velvet Spanish jacket. *Second Dress*—Black silk velvet, trimmed with diamonds, diamond tiara, regal mantle and ermine. *Third Dress*—Same as first. *Fourth Dress*—White satin embroidered with silver, veil and white wreath.

CARMEN.—*First Dress*—Brown velvet jacket and trunks, black hat trimmed with white and red braid, red and blue net for hair, blue and brown striped scarf on shoulder, grey tights, and red gaiters to ankles. *Second Dress*—Searlet velvet riding habit, black hat and feather. *Third Dress*—Canary watered silk trimmed with pearls and blue ribbon velvet, pearls on head.

BEATRIX.—Purple velvet riding dress trimmed with gold, hoops, ruff, black velvet hat and feather.

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